

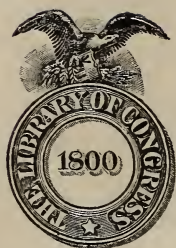
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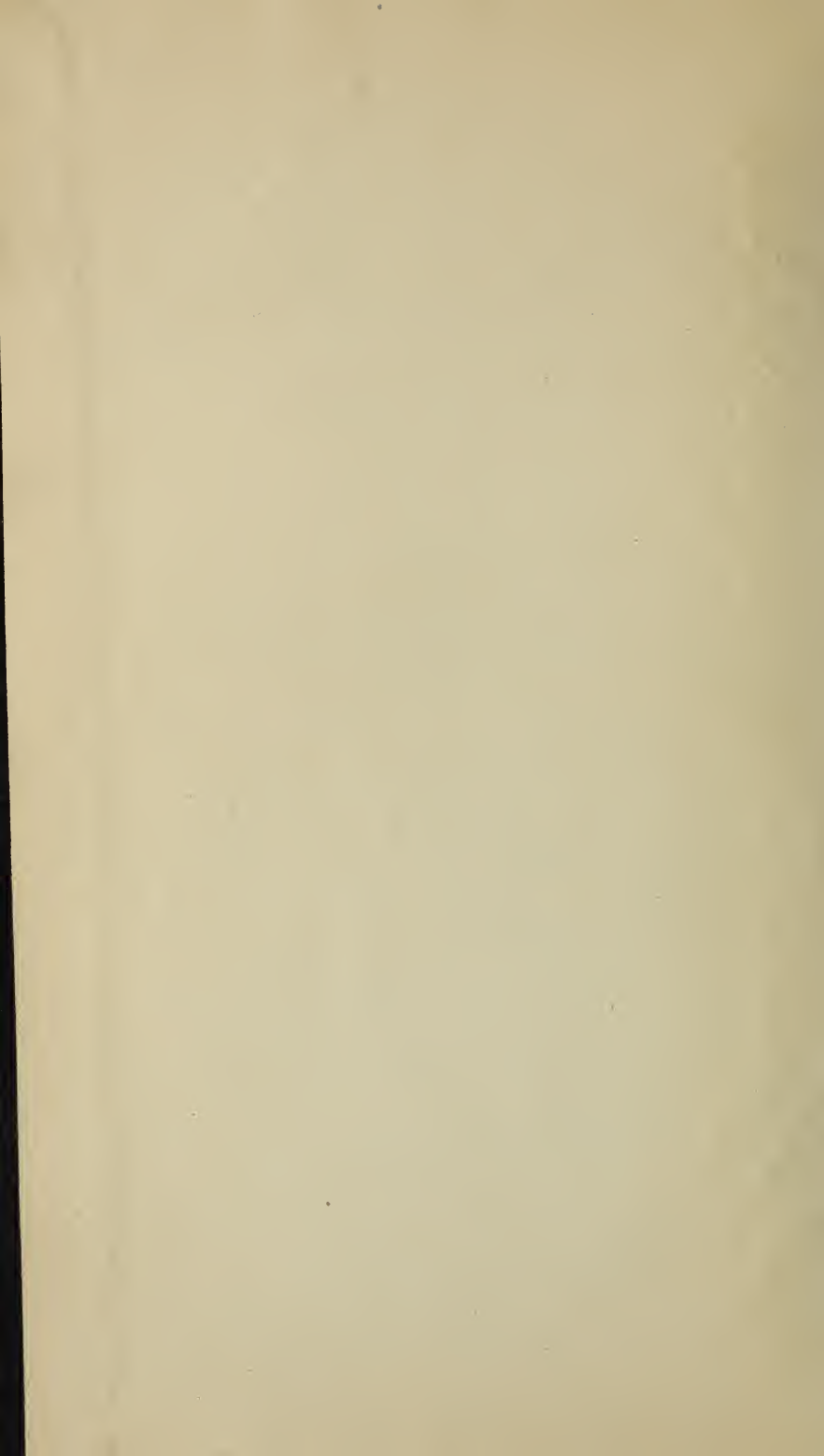
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1818









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A  
**LETTER**  
TO  
**JAMES MONROE.**

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LETTER

TO

JAMES MONROE

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# South America.

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A

## LETTER

ON THE

PRESENT STATE OF THAT COUNTRY,

ADDRESSED TO

JAMES MONROE,

*PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.*

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BY AN AMERICAN.

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*Henry M. Brackenridge*

More powerful each, as needful to the rest,  
And in proportion as it blesses, blest.—POPE.

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London: 4.

Re-printed, from the Washington Edition of 1817, by Hay and Turner,  
No. 11, Newcastle Street, Strand;

PUBLISHED BY J. RIDGEWAY, PICCADILLY; AND J. BOOTH,  
DUKE STREET, PORTLAND PLACE.

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LETTER

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## PREFACE

TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

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THE contest between the Provinces of South America and Spain has, from the beginning, been viewed with no ordinary interest in this country. It is impossible, indeed, to exaggerate the importance of the stake for which the parties are contending. The Provinces in question, in spite of the narrow and illiberal policy of Spain, have now attained a sufficient degree of strength to vindicate their right to the uncontroled enjoyment of the blessings which Nature has scattered with so lavish a hand on their country. If they succeed in this great object, a boundless field will be opened to domestic improvement and foreign commerce; if they fail, the power which reduced them to subjection, can never for a moment forget that every addition to their resources and prosperity must add to the insecurity of her tenure. On the issue of this contest, therefore, will depend the prosperity or devastation of South America.

In the independence and prosperity of South America, two nations are particularly interested—the United States and Great Britain. The

United States and Great Britain are the countries which possess the most extensive commerce, and therefore they are the most interested in any extension of the field of commercial activity. Great Britain, however, is also the greatest manufacturing country in the world, and the opening of a continent, abounding in all sorts of raw produce, to her manufacturing industry, gives her a much deeper interest in the issue than the United States, of which the manufacturers will long be unable to stand in competition with the British.

The inhabitants of the United States are not blind to the advantages which the Independence of South America will ensure to them. They allow that the chief benefit will be derived by Britain; but they think that the share which will remain to them will be far from inconsiderable. We are not to wonder then that the inhabitants of the United States, independently of all sympathy which a people engaged in a struggle similar to their own, should take a warm interest in the contest. From their proximity to the countries which are the theatre of hostilities, they have many opportunities of obtaining information with respect to the situation and prospects of the contending parties that are denied to us. The judgment therefore which that people (who are generally allowed to be no less alive to their interest, than good judges of the best means of

advancing it) form on a question like that between Spain and her Colonies, ought deservedly to have great weight in this country.

The following Pamphlet is the production of an American, and is understood to speak the sentiments, not merely of the people of America in general, but also of the American government. The author of it, is a Mr. Brackenridge, the son of the late Judge Brackenridge, an individual of considerable consequence in America. Mr. Brackenridge is now employed by the American Government, in the capacity of Secretary in the Commission recently appointed to proceed to South America in the Congress frigate. This Pamphlet must therefore be viewed as in some degree official; for the American government would never have selected to the important office of Secretary to this Commission, a man who had espoused so warmly the cause of the South Americans, if his sentiments had not been shared by themselves. Though the name of the author is not affixed to the American Edition, yet in the several newspapers of that country, he is alluded to without any reserve, and we think it but justice to the merits of the publication, and the intention which gave rise to it, that the friends of this cause should know the person to whom they are indebted for it.

*Feb. 6, 1818.*





TO

**JAMES MONROE,**

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

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SIR,

THE discovery of America, the separation of the British colonies, and the present struggle for independence in the colonies of Spain, are three of the most interesting occurrences of the last thousand years. Columbus, in search of a passage which would change the track of Eastern commerce, discovered a new world, possessing greater riches than the East, and capable of sustaining a population nearly equal to all the rest of the globe. Although disappointed in one object, he succeeded in opening sources of wealth to Europe which have changed its condition for the better in every department of life. The discovery of America enabled Europe to reach a point of improvement, which she could not otherwise have arrived at for centuries, if at all. Those who followed Columbus, with little or no scruple, appropriated to themselves whatever was found in the discovered countries, peaceably in some cases, but in most instances, by violence and cruelty. The inhabitants of America, in some districts numerous and far advanced in civilization, were regarded by the Spaniards with little more respect than the wild beasts of the forest. They

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were destroyed without mercy, their possessions were seized without compunction, and all the principles of justice and humanity were violated without remorse. The superior skill of the Europeans in the arts, derived from the use of letters, which preserves the discoveries of the ingenious and enables the human mind to advance towards perfection, necessarily placed the unfortunate Americans in the power of their invaders. The first discovery of America, and the subsequent encroachments, were alike the acts of enterprising individuals, although their respective sovereigns were careful to come in for the lion's share. As to those portions of the country where vast regions lay waste, (for the possession as hunting grounds by a few wandering tribes could scarcely be considered an appropriation of the soil) the laws of God and Nature might justify other members of the human family in taking a sufficient portion of the common inheritance for their subsistence. This was the case over nearly all the country now possessed by us, who, as the first of the colonies in forming an independent government, have become peculiarly entitled to the appellation of Americans. Our conquests were principally over the asperities of the climate and the earth; the axe and the plough were the weapons with which they were effected. If the natives have been sufferers, we are not to blame; the hunter cannot subsist by the side of the cultivator; the wild animals, which constitute his support, fly the fixed habitations of man. As in the natural progressive stages of society, so in relative position or vicinity, there must be a separation between these two states of human existence. The hunter and the cultivator could not be neighbours; the hunter, therefore, retired, and our settlements advanced.

In other parts of the continent the inhabitants were not always found in the hunter's state. Although not possessed of letters, they were far advanced as men can be without them. They had made no inconsiderable progress in the arts; they had their fixed seats or cities, vieing in population with those of Europe or Asia, their cultivation of the soil in a high state of improvement, and they had learned, unfortunately for them, to bestow a factitious value upon those metals which, in the old world, were regarded as the representatives of wealth, and used as the medium of commerce. Such was the situation of Mexico, of Peru, and parts of Chili.—These unhappy people were assailed by the Spaniards with barbarous cupidity, and every species of violence and injustice practised upon them. This, it is true, was the work of a few audacious and lawless persons, but it met the approbation of the sovereign, who came in when all was quieted for the larger share of the spoil. The sovereign took possession of these countries by the RIGHT OF CONQUEST; and even after the enterprizing and industrious of his own subjects had formed settlements and built cities, the privileges of conquest were never abandoned. Nothing can be more true than that the discovery, settlement, and conquest of America, was the work of private enterprize, but the advantages have been reaped by the different sovereigns. From the first discovery until the present day, they had but one thing in view—to draw the greatest possible advantage from the colonies, without regard to their prosperity. The colonies have furnished vast sums to be spent abroad, or rather squandered in wars and in the extravagance of courts. Their advancement, further than this object was answered, was regarded with in-

difference; the misery and wretchedness of the colonies would have been preferred to their prosperity, if this would have produced the greatest supply. They were in fact regarded as mere appendages, very useful and convenient, but forming no part of the state.

The policy pursued by the different European states towards the colonies, received a tinge from their peculiar characters, unavoidably influenced by the situation and nature of the colony itself, keeping always in view the sole advantage of the European sovereignty, no matter how disagreeable or distressing it might be to the colonies. The Spaniards, for instance, found some districts abundant in the precious metals; here every pursuit was discouraged, and even forbidden, not necessarily connected with the working of the mines. Here neither agriculture, manufactures, commerce, nor even considerable population was of much importance; hence the mine districts have generally been condemned to barrenness more by the policy of the sovereign than by Nature, while the inhabitants have been the poorest on the continent. Nature has established no such law, as that because we reside in countries abounding in the precious metals, we must therefore want the comforts and conveniences of life. If permitted to avail ourselves of these advantages, we should prosper even if the soil were barren, by exchanging for things more necessary. But regarding solely the Spanish interests, these districts have been condemned to barrenness and poverty; they have been closed like caverns where the light of day is not seen. These riches must be transported abroad to gratify the idle debauchery of a court, and unintentionally to benefit the unshackled industry of neighbouring nations. This vile and oppressive



monopoly appeared in every thing; when the colonies could procure what was barely sufficient to exchange for the commodities which the crown permitted to be furnished them by those of her own subjects, or even the subjects of other nations to whom she sold this privilege, all further advancement was deemed unnecessary, and therefore checked, lest they might cease to want those articles, mostly of the first necessity, which the crown was desirous of supplying. Agriculture in some districts was permitted to grow to a certain extent; manufactures were every where forbidden; the native spirit of commercial enterprize was entirely repressed; no commerce was permitted but through the *mother country*, and for her benefit. This is the reason why countries which have been settled so many hundred years, are still so thinly populated. Some conjecture may be formed of the state in which South America might have been at this moment, from the progress we have made since our shackles were thrown off. Horses, cattle, and sheep in South America, have increased without number, while the human race, compared with this country, has scarcely made any perceptible progress. But small portions of the Spanish colonies have been cursed, or blessed (just as one may choose to consider it) with mines. The inhabitants in general gain their living by the cultivation of the soil and the preparation of articles of commerce; they are cultivators and shepherds, but chiefly the first; for where they were not at liberty to set their own prices on their commodities, but were compelled to accept what the monopolists chose to give, and to pay for European merchandize whatever the vender chose to ask, all agricultural industry, further than was necessary for a subsistence, was necessarily repressed. To countries on

which Nature has showered her choicest gifts, it is not surprizing that thousands of European Spaniards should be enticed, and it is natural to suppose, that population without some check would rapidly increase. Spain would easily discover that it was unnecessary to hold out encouragement to emigration; she could, therefore, without fear of crippling the colonies, impose such burthens as would at the same time retard their progress, and procure a present profit. These burthens were of course to be increased with the growth of the colonies. Possibly this might have been practised with a foresight of the future strength of the colonies and the fear of their revolt; but most probably it proceeded from the insatiate avarice which instigated her to squeeze from the colonies the utmost they were capable of yielding. Jealousy, which has generally been regarded as the characteristic of the Spaniard, may have had some share in imposing the restrictions and establishing seclusion from the rest of the world, which has converted the country of the Spanish colonist into a prison, guarded with as much vigilance as the seraglio of an Eastern despot; but again, selfish cupidity is the ruling passion—foreigners have been excluded from intercourse with the colonies, for the same reason that every species of industry and enterprize on their part was forbidden, wherever there existed a chance on the part of the crown to sell a privilege, or turn pedlar itself, and supply the subject at the most extortional prices. We shall be asked of what use would colonies be without these advantages? I ask in turn, what men, possessed of sufficient strength, would submit to be colonists on such terms? The history of all colonies, whether Carthaginian, Phenician, Grecian, or Roman, down to those of modern times, amply prove

that resistance to these impositions has been uniform; and its cause may be therefore traced to the instinct of our nature, which urges us to oppose, as far as our strength will permit, the authority of usurped power and the exactions of injustice. No reasoning, but that which justifies the retaining a slave, can justify the placing of the colonies on a different footing from other portions of the empire. It is not surprizing that the British colonies, so much later in their establishment, and in a soil and climate so inferior, should have so far outstripped those of Spain.

The British colonies were established under more happy auspices. The spirit of liberty had been fostered by several important occurrences. The human mind had been unchained by the reformation; and the frequent resistance to the exertion of absolute power in the sovereign, had produced such an acknowledgement of many of the essential rights of man, in such a permanent form, as to be easily appealed to. Numerous safeguards of liberty had been established. The colonists carried with them the seeds of liberty which they transplanted in a more congenial soil, where they could grow up without being overshadowed by kings and nobles. The colonists were the freest of the free. The habit of reducing rights to a permanent and tangible record, had given rise to the various charters under which the different colonies were established. They were permitted to overcome the first difficulties, inseparable from their situation, with little or no assistance; the Indian nations who opposed their settlements, were subdued; the lands were cultivated, and cities began to rise on the shores of the Atlantic. The colonial trade in a short time, gave employment to thousands of Englishmen, and a valuable market was soon



opened for British manufactures. Here, with little or no expense to England, a vast treasure of wealth was displayed to her enterprize and industry. The colonies increased rapidly in consequence of their partaking of the freedom which was in some measure peculiar to Great Britain. It was not long, however, before these advantages on the part of Britain were abused; the colonists were disgusted with the dispositions manifested by her, to consult only her own momentary interests; and they were continually insulted by the insolence of the court favorites sent over to enrich themselves at their expense: this, in countries where there was no distinction of ranks in society, where the pretensions of birth were but little known, where there was no gentry entitled by hereditary right to admiration and worship, constituted in a word the proper elements of republicanism.—Fortunately for the colonies, Great Britain had delayed the exercise of arbitrary power until they had begun to feel their strength. Two millions of freemen after a long and arduous struggle against one of the most powerful states of the old world, was at last acknowledged an independent nation. Our population, our wealth, our strength, has increased with a rapidity unexampled. We have become ten times more valuable even to that nation which endeavoured to chain us down, in spite of all the arts which her folly has practised to excite our enmity; *to the whole world we are becoming each day more useful, and even necessary.*

If our independence was an event of such magnitude, so universally interesting, how important must the independence of the whole continent—the whole of the new world, appear! In us the birth of a nation was hailed, by the rest of mankind, with enthusiastic joy; we are now about to behold the birth of Empires. Eighteen millions

of souls are now struggling to be free; unable to act conjointly, yet all concurring in their efforts to shake off the European yoke.—We behold the inhabitants of regions, which for centuries have furnished wealth to stimulate the industry not only of Europe and America, but even of Asia, about to take their mighty destinies into their own hands—about to give a full developement to their resources—to establish governments, and most probably on the best and wisest models—to form a chain of confederacies, united by a thousand communities, not of family, but of wise and useful intercourse; in fine, to prepare the way for the most splendid revolution that has ever been witnessed on the earth. Mighty must be the revolution which will be effected by nearly half the habitable world, when suffered without restraint to unfold its resources and augment its population. Nations are no more formed for solitary existence than men; it is the continued intercourse and commerce with different countries which civilizes mankind, and lays open the career of enterprise and industry. What nation is there that could be blotted out from the map without injury to all that should remain? This intercourse gave bread to thousands, nay, gave life to thousands who would never have been called into existence. How interesting then to all nations the birth of the American Empires, whose commerce will soon add incalculably to the fund upon which the industry of the world may draw! A scene more magnificent never “burst on the eye of philosophy.” Past events have sufficiently proved, that under the government of Spain this great work can never be accomplished; like a decrepid and worthless hag, she has been an incubus on South America. With one of the finest countries in Europe, if deprived of the colonies and compelled merely to use those

advantages in her future intercourse with them in the way Great Britain has done with the United States, she may yet be regenerated and become more wealthy and respectable than she would be with all the gold and silver of America, bestowed upon her idleness and sloth. The discovery of America has already produced wonderful effects; but when we compare these effects with what must ultimately take place, they seem but as the first dawn of a glorious day. No one can contemplate the future state of America without having his mind filled with the most magnificent ideas and the most sublime anticipations. Hitherto it has been a discovery locked up.

The separation of the American colonies has been regarded by men of foresight as an event that in the course of time would happen, in spite of every precaution to prevent it. There is nothing more natural than to suppose, that when the vast tracts of country on this side of the Atlantic should attain a population proportioned to their extent, this must so far surpass that of the colonizing state, that this last would become the mere satellite. The colonies could not be persuaded to remain the subordinate and inferior, when the old state had fallen into comparative insignificance. Suppose all the rest of Europe removed to the distance of three thousand miles from Spain should be found in a colonial subjection to this power? The very suggestion of the idea exhibits its absurdity. When James I. united the crown of Scotland to that of England, some expressed an apprehension that England would become a province; the very reverse of which was the natural consequence. In politics, as in astronomy, it is a law of Nature that the smaller bodies revolve around the larger. The moment the colony exceeded the ancient state in numbers, and at the same time



was not greatly inferior in spirit and intelligence, the ancient state must necessarily take the place before occupied by the colony, or a separation ensue.

There is another reason for this tendency to separation :—the colony and the ancient state must in time become distinct nations; the difference of character and occupations, arising from the difference of climate and from the nature of the countries which they occupy; considerable changes in the language and manners in both, owing to the want of frequent intercourse, would soon produce essential distinctions. Added to this, the offensive arrogance of the European, who fancies himself a superior being, as coming immediately from the original and purer fountain of the race, looking down with contempt and despising the degenerate natives, who, in turn, would naturally feel indignation at the self-sufficiency and insolence of the stranger. Of this we had no little experience in our own country; before the revolutionary war, every Englishman thought himself entitled to allegiance from every American, and the natural deviation from English manners was considered a proof of degeneracy. This very readily accounts for much of that unfriendly feeling which has existed between this country and England, and which to superficial observers appears unnatural. If the mere circumstance of living in a distant country, and adopting different habits, will in a few years bring about so great a diversity, this must be still greater where there is an actual difference of race. In the United States, we have numbers from all the different nations of Europe; in South America, it is true, the colonists were more generally from the colonizing state; but the difference was more than made up by the numbers of the civilized Indians, who still formed a great proportion of the

population of many parts; and these in time became intermixed with the European Spaniards and their descendants, thus forming a distinct people. The natives of the country could without difficulty intermingle, and have common feelings with these their countrymen; while the Europeans, who could not form any great proportion of the whole, would be looked upon as strangers, as foreigners, at least, until they had been long settled in the colony; had families, and had become identified or amalgamated in the mass. The more the colony increased its numbers, and the longer it continued a colony, the farther would it be removed, in point of feeling, from the ancient state; the weaker, therefore, the ties to that state, and the greater the difficulty of retaining it in subjection. When the habit, the charm, or magic, of dependence was once broken, the ancient state would be regarded in the same light as any other foreign power, and its attempts to bring back the colonies to subjection considered in the same light as the invasion of any other enemy. Hence it is, that the natives of North and South America have become *patriots*, defenders of their native soil; while Spain is acting the part of an invader, and amuses herself with the belief that she is endeavouring to quell the insurrection of a neighbouring province, in which there still remains the latent feelings of affection, like those of a disobedient child towards its parent. Spain is not engaged in reducing the revolt of Valencia or Catalonia, *but she is carrying on a war against a distant nation, or nations, with the greatest possible disadvantage.* Nothing can exceed the folly of such an attempt. For even if she should be successful for the present, can she produce a change in their minds? She might as well think of making war on the elements. The time is not



very distant, when *in the course of nature they must be independent.*

It is very evident that the Spanish colonies had long ago become a very different people from the European Spaniards, and as the natural consequence, mutual dislikes and jealousies would be cherished. They must have long since felt that they were a people held in subjection. They could naturally ask, "how long does Spain mean to consider us as appendages to her monarchy, as slaves fastened to the wheels of her chariot to swell her vanity and pomp? Are we to be colonies for ever? Must we renounce all hope of being able to claim some of the honours of our beloved native soil—of being permitted to improve and ornament the birth place of our ancestors, our own homes, the only country which possesses our affections, the residence of our friends and relations? Are we to be restricted in all our enterprizes by strangers, who come to us as it were from another planet, who have no ties amongst us, and are indifferent to the prosperity and improvement of our country? Shall we tamely submit to these task-masters who will not permit us to use what is our own, and who carry away the fruits of our industry we know not whither?" The only answer that could be made by the oppressor, would be short and simple, "I have the power." This is denied. The madness, the pride, the obstinacy of Spain, is not yet satisfied, *but the world is satisfied—that a peop'e who can defend themselves for ten years, will be able to defend themselves for ever.*

The policy of Spain necessarily tended to create and to increase this deep-rooted enmity. Its government would soon be considered as an odious usurpation. The most pleasing subject of the thoughts and conversation of the

colonists, would be—their liberation from this political bondage. They would look to the day which would bring about this so much desired event, with something like religious devotion. There is nothing more natural than the prevalence of such wishes. Even in extensive monarchies, which have the advantage of contiguity, or which have but slight separations, there is a constant tendency to fall by their own weight. In Cicero's orations against Verras, we have a fine picture of the thousand impositions to which the remote provinces must necessarily be subject; the vexations practised by the almost irresponsible vice-roys, governors, and sub-agents, sent to govern, or rather rob, are without end. Nothing can remedy the want of a centre of power, an original fountain of authority of their own. A country thus separated, without a government of its own, is a world without a sun. The distance from the metropolis renders it impossible to have feelings in common with it, or but few. No empire, therefore, of extensive territory, and particularly when separated by oceans, can be of long duration, unless divided into separate states, each possessing its own centre of power, to which the sympathy, passions, and interests of the people are attracted. Besides being in this manner removed from the metropolis, which rendered it impossible for the people of America to have this community of feeling with the Europeans, and which enabled the imported governors and dignitaries to practice their abuses with impunity, they were separated by an ocean of a thousand leagues. By placing the Americans at such a distance from Europe, Nature seems to have forbidden their becoming dependencies, plantations, or appendages of petty European states. The king of Brazil acted a wise part in transporting his court and go-

vernment to his American possessions and converting the ancient seat of empire into a province; his American possessions had grown too considerable to remain as a distinct colony; and although his form of government is not such as we should prefer to see generally prevail in America, it is yet much better than if he had attempted to retain them in the colonial state. He must, however, hasten to identify his interests with those of America—he must cease to be European—he must escape from the trammels of European politics, or he will find his position an uneasy one. I should be glad to see the breach between him and Spain still further widened, and at the same time a good healthy rejection of the interference of the allies in the affairs of America. The royal family of Spain would have acted wisely for its own interests in transporting itself to Mexico; and even George the Third might have retained his American colonies, and by this time have been master of the new world, had he transferred his crown from the island of Great Britain to the American continent.

Spain has been well aware of this disposition or tendency to separation on the part of the colonies, and to establish governments of their own. She knew that the colonial state was a forced one, and too unnatural to last for ever. She had had, every where, frequent indications of the dispositions of the people which she could not mistake. They were gradually becoming ripe for a separation, in spite of all the precautions she could devise to retard this so much dreaded state. An event, however, in which she took some share (actuated no doubt by the desire of being freed from her ambitious neighbours, the English) served, contrary to her expectations, to hasten this maturity. This was the successful emanci-



pation of the United States. To avoid one evil she encouraged another even more pernicious. Her colonies could not behold without uneasiness, the full enjoyment of the blessings of self-government and a free constitution in adjoining colonies. The imprisoned are tormented by the desire to escape, as much by the natural love of liberty, as by the sight of others in the enjoyment of it. The precautions of Spain for the preservation of her colonies were in consequence increased; and their dissatisfaction increased in the same proportion. All the pains which were taken to prevent the introduction of liberal principles into her colonies were in vain; the importation of goods may be prohibited, but thoughts will find their way like the rays of light; it is as vain to forbid the spreading of knowledge as to forbid the sun to shine. The true principles of liberty, which have at last escaped abroad, can never be consigned to the tomb of secresy. The art of printing will, in time, effect the liberty of the press; and wherever this liberty prevails, despotism is at an end. These principles shook Europe to its centre; and, although restrained at length, in some measure they are still silently working their way. They found their way at last to the more natural clime of Southern America; and we have seen that in America these principles have been invariably connected with the establishment of independence. *Formerly a revolution indicated little more than a change of masters; it now means the establishment of free government.* The unexampled prosperity of the United States, the knowledge of which could not be concealed from the colonists, furnished the aliment to keep alive the fire which had been thus lighted up—their triumph over all their enemies, and their conquest over all their difficulties, at last, must render

this fire unextinguishable. The daring enterprize and the intelligence of our citizens, who continually found their way into the Spanish colonies, in spite of all the guards which the most watchful jealousy could establish, contributed not a little to open the eyes of the colonists. For twenty-five years before the revolutions of South America took place, there was a slow but progressive state of preparation for this momentous occurrence. It is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that the separation of the colonies was a revolt produced by an unpremeditated and accidental event—a sudden and passing storm which would soon be over—it was, in fact, the natural consummation of what had been long and gradually preparing, hastened by accidental circumstances, but not occasioned by them.

There is nothing which tends so much to check the sympathy we should be disposed to give the Southern Americans, in their present interesting struggle, as the prevailing idea that they are totally unfit for self-government—a character which we bestow, without discrimination, on all, although there is by no means an uniformity in the moral state of the different colonies. This is a topic of which their enemies have availed themselves, unfortunately, with great success. They are represented without distinction or discrimination, as in a state of extreme ignorance and debasement (a state, by the bye, which ought to cover the Spaniard with shame) without any kind of information, and without morals; lazy, inconstant, worthless, and, at the same time, violent, jealous, and cruel; composed of heterogeneous casts, likely to be split into factions, and, if left to themselves, to exterminate each other like the soldiers of Cadmus. In fact no pains have been spared

to represent them in the most hateful and disgusting colours, and there are many of us who now take it for granted that they are the most despicable of the human race. Let us for a moment inquire by whom is this indiscriminate character bestowed? It is given either by their bitterest enemies or by those who are unacquainted with them, or whose opportunities have enabled to see them only in the most unfavourable light.—Persons who have never seen a Southern American, are in the habit of condemning them all by the wholesale, as stupid, depraved, and worthless. Notwithstanding this, if we consult the enlightened travellers who have visited those countries, we shall find that they concur in bearing testimony of their native intelligence, and of the number of well informed and well educated people they possess. But is it for us to repeat or believe such slanders? We should recollect the character which until lately was charitably given to us throughout Europe; and we should hesitate before we condemn a people whom we have had no opportunity of correctly estimating. Until the American revolution, it was a fashionable opinion, extremely agreeable to European vanity, that man degenerated in the new world, and if not continually renewed by European intelligence, would be in danger of losing the faculty of reason. How long since has this slander been refuted? There are those who assert it even now; yet the enlightened who knew that the true dignity of human character does not depend upon climate or soil, but on the liberty and freedom of government, as necessary as the sun and air to plants, foretold what we should be, when left to ourselves. “Why is it,” asked an eloquent orator, “that the slave looks quietly on the spot where Leonidas expired? The nature of man has not changed,



but Sparta has lost the government which her liberty could not survive."—Man is every where a noble and lofty being, and if the burthen which bows him to the earth be taken away, if the slavish bands in which he is fastened are burst, he will suddenly rise with ease to the natural standard of his character. Our enemies in Europe are still in the habit, in spite of the proofs we have given, both in peace and war, of representing us as degenerate, at least as incapable of any thing great. These things we know to be the slander of malevolence and envy, repeated by ignorance and prejudice; may we not in charity suppose that all we have heard of the Southern Americans is not true?

The standing topic of our enemies during our eventful struggle for independence, was our supposed incapacity for self-government. They represented us as being, in general, an uninformed people, our distance from the metropolis, from the sun of knowledge, rendering it impossible for us to know any thing, and therefore incapable of making any good use of our independence, even if it were possible for us to gain it; they said we were restless and factious, and would either fall into a state of horrible anarchy, or from our intestine divisions become a prey to the ambition of military chiefs. Nothing of all this happened, or was likely to happen. It is lamentable to see the proneness of the human mind to form opinions without data or experience; or to form general theories from a few isolated facts. It is a source of a thousand vexations in politics, in science, in morals, and in philosophy. It is this bigotry of opinion which forms the greatest barrier to the progress of the human mind. The ignorant and the arrogant will ever believe, *that what they do not know to exist, does not exist.* I was once asked

by a foreigner why no books of original composition were ever published in this country. For this simple reason, I replied, because you have never read them. We pronounce upon the character of the South Americans; we declare them to be deficient in all those qualities which we most prize, not because we know them, but because we do not. It is thus that the vain and contemptible African or Asiatic sovereign pronounces the European to be an inferior race—in a state of ignorance and barbarity.

The character which we bestow upon our brethren of the South would do injustice to the most uncivilized of our Indians. That information is as general among them, as amongst our people, no one, I presume, will pretend; yet, have we made no progress since the American revolution? Let this question be answered. Three generations of freemen have arisen since that period, and each has undergone some improvement. I would ask, amongst whom began our resistance to Great Britain—by whom was it carried on and directed? Certainly by the intelligent part of the community, who moved the uninformed mass, addressing themselves to passions which belong to nature, not to education alone, then inculcating ideas which had not before suggested themselves to those who are not in the habit of reading and thinking. Compare the state of general information and public spirit at that time with the present, and it will be found that the balance will be as much in favour of the latter, as it is in favour of the present state of our population, wealth, and public improvements. We had many well educated men, especially in the different professions; we had a numerous class in the middle walk of life, that is, possessing a moderate share of wealth,



and with sufficient leisure and opportunity for acquiring enough of information to understand and place a proper value upon their rights, and to appreciate the advantage of a separation from Great Britain. Has it ever been pretended that such a population is no where to be found in South America? I am far from pretending that the great mass of its population is as well prepared as ours was; but let it be recollected that we established at once, not only a free government, but the freest that had ever been known in the world. It does not follow that because the Southern Americans cannot establish a government within many degrees as free as ours, that they are therefore incapable of any thing but absolute despotism. It would not be difficult to prove that there are some strong features of resemblance in the southern population to our own, and which have an equal tendency to qualify them for free government. The means of acquiring affluence, for instance, were sufficient to raise up in every village or district, families sufficiently at ease in their circumstances to acquire some information and to maintain a respectable character; they were every where more locomotive and consequently more thoughtful. They had their professional men as we had, who were necessarily enlightened, and were attached to the soil by the ties of birth and by family connexions, and yet could aspire to no public offices or honours. The native priesthood were, with hardly an exception, excluded from the dignities of the church, which were usually bestowed on foreigners. The secular priests, so far from being inimical to the cause of independence, have been its most active supporters, and what is more, the advocates of the most *liberal principles*. The fact is, that these native priests, who are the sons of the most respectable families, and, in most in-

stances, have little more in reality than the name, are the leaders of their armies, their partizan officers, and engage actively in disseminating political information among the people. These men have in fact been long brooding over the emancipation of their country, and many, it is highly probable, have been induced to put on the gown in order the more effectually to conceal their studies. I have been acquainted with several gentlemen, who informed me that long before the present struggle in South America, they had been surprized at the liberal sentiments of this class, and at the extraordinary avidity with which they gathered up every thing which related to our country.

Although incredible pains were taken by the Spanish government to shut out from the colonies all information, all knowledge of a liberal kind, and notwithstanding also all books were proscribed whose possible tendency might be to disclose to the Southern Americans the *important secret that they were men*, yet it was utterly impossible to exclude every kind of learning: some branches were even encouraged in order to divert the attention from more dangerous studies; they had their colleges and seminaries of learning in the principal cities and towns, as well as schools for teaching the first elements; while the sons of many of the more wealthy, as was the case in our own country, were sent abroad. In a philosophical point of view, there is nothing so vain as this attempt to force the thoughts into a particular channel like a stream of water. The reading of any book can do little more than set the mind in motion; and when we once begin to think, who but the Divinity can set bounds to our thoughts? The mere reading of an edict forbidding a book to be read, might give rise to a

train of thought infinitely more dangerous than the book itself.

In Southern America, as well as in the North, subsistence was easily obtained; and from the thinness of the population, men were worth much more than in the thickly settled, starving countries of Europe. There was little or no hereditary nobility to look down upon them, and habituate them to feel an inferiority; such nobility as were in the country (sprigs from old rotten Spanish stocks) were regarded as exotics, badly adapted to the climate and soil. In general, each one was the fabricator of his own fortune. The only real distinction of rank was that of superior wealth, talents, or office; the exotic nobility, who aspired to something more, were no better than strangers, often contemptible in themselves, and secretly despised by all classes of the natives. I do not see that I risk much in boldly asserting, that our Southern brethren, taken collectively, were better fitted for liberty (Switzerland excepted) than any part of Europe. The shepherds of America are a bold, vigorous, manly race of men, and from the very nature of their employments, serious and contemplative. While the European Spaniards were sinking into indolence, and losing the manly spirit of independence which formerly placed them above all their neighbours, and which would still show itself under a different government, that spirit was cherished and improving in the colonies, and all that is now wanting, is to direct it to a noble purpose. The agricultural part of the population was more free, and gained a more easy subsistence than their European brethren; it was not in the power of Spain to prevent this. The merchants and mechanics of towns, in like manner, from the greater facility of living, had more time



for reflection than persons in the same class in countries which are crowded. It is in the nature of things, that there should be more general equality among the natives of the Spanish colonies than in European countries. Persons there were, it is true, who possessed very large estates, but these were of their own acquiring, or of their immediate ancestors. One of the richest individuals in New Spain, I have been informed, was a few years ago, a mule driver. We should fall into the greatest errors, if we formed our opinion of the essential moral state of the colony by the European state from which it sprung. There are characteristics which run through all the colonies, of whatsoever nation they may be; and an opinion much more accurate may be formed of their character, by an attentive examination of our own, than by taking the old state, or mere theory, or the slanders of enemies, as a guide.

The specimens of Southern Americans we have had in this country, within a few years past, are surely not such as to justify the opinions which many of us entertain of the character and capacities of those people. The countries which can produce such men as Clemente, and Gaul, are surely not sunk in brutish ignorance, or incapable of rational self-government. These we have heard to breathe sentiments of manly independence and of exalted patriotism, which until now were thought to belong only to Greece or Rome. With shame, have I heard these men complain that we regarded all their countrymen as sunk below the rest of their species—that we were entirely unacquainted even with their geography, and that many of us treat their cause with a contemptuous indifference. I blush for the vanity and selfishness of my countrymen, who are unwilling to allow the common at-

tributes of humanity to these generous men, who have offered their lives and fortunes to purchase freedom for their beloved native soil.

Happily for my fellow men, all the efforts of despots will not suffice to arrest the progress of the human mind in America. Spain has adopted a system calculated to retard the general prosperity of her colonies; she has gratified her cupidity by the most reproachful exactions, yet the vast extent of the new world, and the facility of obtaining subsistence, rendered it impossible to exercise tyranny of a mere personal nature to any great degree. The American has always been a freeman, in spite of tyrannical measures, which only tended to retard the aggregate prosperity; the individual was free, from the very nature of the country which he occupied. Let us not imitate the egotism of the British, who assert that they are the only people in the Universe who can enjoy a rational and manly freedom. Let us believe that freedom may be enjoyed in more than one form; Switzerland was free; the Italian republics were free; Holland was free, though each in a different form. Southern America, too, will be free, and there is reason to believe, will be free as we are. There is ample reason why we should be cautious in pronouncing hastily on the character of our brethren of the South. Has humanity no claim upon us? Is it more than fair, to allow the patriots at least an opportunity of proving whether they are, or are not, worthy of the glorious privilege of independence? What injury to the world can result from the experiment? Surely no state in which they can be placed, can be worse for the interests of mankind, for the cause of human nature, than a return to the withering grasp of Spain, resolved as she

is, rather than not rule, to rule over ruined cities and deserted plains.

The character of Old Spain itself, although at present sunk so low, I have already said, was formerly of a very opposite kind. We are wrong in supposing that Spaniards are insensible to the charms of liberty, or that they are ignorant of the principles of free government. The Spanish history is full of the noblest traits of patriotism, from the time of Viriato down to that of Palafox. There are at the same time, proofs of the resolution of the people, in opposing the despotic and tyrannical measures of princes. The conduct of the Cortes, and the provincial Juntas, prove that they are not incapable of governing themselves in the most popular forms. The defence of the country, in times of the greatest difficulty, was conducted by these assemblies in the most spirited manner, while the *legitimate* sovereign, instead of meditating, like English Alfred, the means of regaining his kingdom, was busied in the occupation of a woman—a nun—in embroidering petticoats! *Liberty is not even yet extinct among the people of Spain.* The constitution, or form of government, adopted by them, contained all the finest features of those of England and the United States, while the colonies at the same moment, breathed sentiments still more free. The friends of humanity entertained hopes that Spain, under a limited monarchy, would assume her former station in Europe; but these hopes have been disappointed by the treacherous ingratitude and bigotry of the miserable creature who now usurps the throne—a throne which he had before renounced, and which was restored to him by his subjects, on conditions that he has basely violated.



The Juntas and Cabildos have always existed in the Spanish monarchy; they are popular assemblies which place no inconsiderable share of the government in the hands of the subject, and like the Trial by Jury in England, have accustomed the people to feel themselves something more than cyphers in the state. From the necessity of the thing, these popular assemblies or councils, were more in use in the colonies than in old Spain, which circumstance, taken in conjunction with the greater degree of personal freedom and independence in the colonies, on account of the remoteness of the settlements, must have rendered the people of a very different cast from the slaves of an absolute despotism. It is not so difficult a thing to be free as some would lead us to believe; it is the natural condition of man—he is for ever struggling to return to the state for which he is destined by Nature.—On the other hand, slavery is a forced and artificial condition, which can only be maintained by binding the mind and body with vile chains. What is there in nature to prevent the patriots, after freeing themselves of the foreign despotism put over them, from establishing, in time, mild and wholesome governments? They cannot want for information with respect to the true principles of such government; they live in an age sufficiently enlightened on this subject; there is to be found both precept and example; they will have nothing more to do than to choose such as suit them. Their intercourse with the English and with ourselves, cannot fail to aid them in forming correct opinions on political matters. They may, like us, adopt the free principles of the English government, without the scaffolding which hides and deforms the building; they will not be likely to establish a monarchy from the want of genuine royal blood; for their best fa-

milies, as with us, can trace their ancestry but little beyond the universal deluge.

It is not always safe to reason from what has been, to what will be. If some parts of the old world have failed in the establishment of free government, this may arise from a thousand causes which cannot operate in the new world; and here, moreover, there may be a thousand causes favourable to free government, which are nowhere else to be found. A sapient English writer asserted that we could establish no permanent government, because we had no lords or royal family, that we must therefore fall into a state of anarchy, for without government, said he, man can no more live than a fish without water to swim in. "Admitting it as fact," replied our venerable Franklin, "that we shall not be able to establish governments of any kind, the consequence does not follow in America, whatever it might in England; the Indians have no government, in the proper sense of the word; many of our remote settlements are without government, excepting such as the majority submits to, by a tacit consent; the colonists, in general, as respects their internal concerns, live under governments that have not the weight of a feather compared to those of Europe." In fact, it is a matter of astonishment to Europeans, on their arrival in this country, to find it entirely destitute of government, for that which they can neither see nor feel, they presume not to exist; and yet I would ask, do they not find themselves equally secure? This state of things arises from circumstances peculiar to the colonies of America, and common to them all—circumstances which have operated much more powerfully than our own great wisdom, or the magic of the principles first derived from Britain and purified in America.



There are facts which speak loudly in favour of the intentions of the South Americans. In all the colonies in which the standard of independence has been raised, a formal appeal has been made to the civilized world, setting forth the causes by which they were actuated. These public declarations are couched in terms similar to our own act of the same kind, and evidently dictated by the same spirit. Their proclamations, their political writings, are such as we might safely own in this country. These cannot have failed to have reached the minds of the young and ardent; and those who are growing up, will cherish them through life. I have been told by a gentleman who has frequently questioned the boys of the most common class, "what are you?"—"a patriot"—"why are you a patriot?"—"because I will defend my country against invaders; because I do not like that my country should be governed by strangers, and because I wish to be free."—The establishment of newspapers has invariably followed the expulsion of the Spanish authorities; the enlightened and liberal political dissertations with which these papers are filled, furnish sufficient refutation to the slanders of their enemies. Correct notions on political subjects, are, it is true, confined to a smaller number than they were amongst us at the commencement of our political struggle; but the desire to free themselves from foreign power, has completely taken possession of the great mass of the people. Our constitutions are translated and distributed every where, as well as our best revolutionary writings. Two young lawyers were expressly employed for this purpose by the government of Venezuela, and sent to Philadelphia, where they executed many translations. It would certainly be very strange, if, in this long protracted strug-

gle, a struggle calculated to rouse all the dormant faculties and energies of man, no advancement should have been made in political knowledge. I will mention another fact, which furnishes additional presumption in favour of the patriots, and which at the same time cannot but be grateful to every American bosom—it is the spontaneous affection and esteem, uniformly, and on all occasions, manifested towards the citizens and government of these States. The Americans are hailed as brothers; they are admired, they are received with unbounded confidence; the success and prosperity of the United States is their continued theme; and it is the topic which keeps alive their resolution in their most gloomy and trying moments. How easy would it be to secure, for ever, the friendship of people so disposed! How much is in our power, in shaping the character of nations destined to act so important a part in the affairs of the world! Any considerable changes for the better, in the government of Europe, is, for the present, hopeless, and cannot be effected but by slow degrees; moreover, it is not wise policy in us to concern ourselves about them, but it will be inexcusable in us to remain indifferent as to the nature of the government of our American neighbours. The value of a house depends not a little upon the neighbourhood in which it stands; our situation may be better or worse, from the character of those who adjoin us—surrounded, fortunately for us, we cannot be. The patriots are well aware, that the individual Americans entertain the most ardent wishes for their success, but they complain that our government is cold towards them, as if ashamed to own them; they are unable to assign the reason why, in a republic, the government should be indifferent, and the people animated by the most anxious interest.

In contrasting the efforts of these people to throw off the Spanish yoke, with our own efforts, and with those of other nations, we shall find that on this score there will be no reason to despise them. How long, for instance, did Spain struggle to free herself from the Moors? How long did the Swiss contend, in their almost inaccessible mountains, before they could earn the glorious privilege of having a government of their own? Holland contended forty years against Spain, through a thousand vicissitudes of fortune; to conciliate the different courts of Europe, she repeatedly offered to receive a king from any of them, but none was weak enough to believe that she was serious. There are many things in the history of our struggle, of which we have not much reason to be proud. We had many difficulties to encounter amongst ourselves; out of a population of two millions and a half, it was with the greatest difficulty we could raise inconsiderable armies, while their supplies were always deficient. A contest which, if we had united, if the vigorous had fought, if the rich had furnished means, if all had persevered with constancy and firmness to act their parts, would soon have terminated, was protracted for seven years, and with the aid of a powerful nation. We ought to make some allowance for the South Americans. The incidents of our revolutionary war do not authorize us to speak with contempt of the efforts of a people who labour under a thousand disadvantages, which did not necessarily belong to our situation. The contest in South America has already lasted seven years, with a variety of success; but its general progress has been retarded in the same manner as ours, by the prospect of reconciliation. Before the formation of the constitution, by which the colonies were placed on an equal footing



with Spain, the patriots were every where successful ; by this they were lulled into dangerous security, until they found, that instead of a ratification of this instrument, which had been the means of restoring Ferdinand to his throne, this ungrateful monarch suddenly threw all his disposable troops into different portions of the continent, and directed all his efforts to reduce them to absolute subjection. He pursued a system of cruelty and extermination unparalleled in the history of the world ; the monsters who perpetrated these atrocities will be held up in the darkest page of the bloody and monkish reign of Ferdinand. It is not surprizing that the patriots should have experienced reverses ; it is not surprizing that, in the midst of these scenes of horrid carnage, they should not have had time to establish every where well ordered governments. But we find that they are again regaining the ascendancy, even where the Spaniards appeared at first to carry every thing before them. Notwithstanding the fabrications of the enemies of the patriots, stubborn facts prove to us, that they are in the full tide of success. In the vast provinces of Granada, Venezuela, and Guyana, the royalists have little more than a slight foothold on the coast and in the cities, while all the interior acknowledges no subjection, but is continually sending out parties of armed men, which, like our militia, cannot be long retained in a body, or may not be efficient in fronting a regular disciplined force, yet, must ultimately destroy the enemy in detail. The contest in this section of South America can scarcely be doubtful ; a country more extensive than the old thirteen states, inhabited by two millions of people scattered over its vast surface, cannot be subdued by a few thousand foreign troops. These, in fact, perish on the sea coast, without daring to penetrate



the interior, while the Spaniards would make us believe, that because they have taken possession of a few maritime towns, the country is therefore subdued. If the inconsiderable territory of Holland or Switzerland could resist with success, why may not countries twenty times their extent resist invaders who are compelled to traverse an ocean of three thousand miles? The conquest of such countries is a project of madness; Spain may send army after army of executioners to be destroyed, while the colonists will be every day gathering fresh strength and resolution, and their detestation of their enemies is continually increasing. Is it possible that the colonies, after the dreadful barbarities committed by the Spaniards, can ever be their subjects? There is no part of that country which has not borne testimony of the demoniac cruelty of the invaders; these must ever be present to their memories.—*Nothing short of total extermination of the people* can ever place these countries again in peaceable possession of Spain; this is the only hope remaining to her despicable fury. She exhibits at the same time, the contemptible character of a mendicant for assistance to all the courts of Europe, tacitly acknowledging that without this, her colonies are lost; she is going about like the wolf, with a bone in her throat, but no one will take compassion on the hateful monster.

The united provinces of La Plata, as well as Chili and Peru, are already lost to Spain for ever. For seven years, the first of these has remained entirely unmolested, opening a free intercourse with all nations, and already beginning to feel the advantages of independence. So far from being in danger of the power of Spain, the Buenos Ayreans have been able to detach a sufficient

force to assist their brethren and neighbours of Chili, and put an end to the Spanish power in that colony. Peru must soon follow the condition of Chili; the power of Spain once annihilated in this quarter, can never be restored; she can only send troops round Cape Horn, (an enterprize beyond her strength) or through the province of La Plata. Five millions of souls are therefore free; they have now an opportunity of enjoying that blessing so much desired by all nations, as well as by individuals, of directing their own course—of pursuing their happiness in their own way. May Heaven guide them in the proper use of it, is my most ardent prayer!

The situation of Mexico, which, perhaps, more nearly concerns us than any other part of the world, it is difficult precisely to ascertain. The nature of its coast, its want of ports, its secluded situation, enables the royalists to keep from us all correct information as to the state of the interior. A thousand petty artifices and fabrications are used to impose upon the world, in this instance, as well as in every thing which concerns the colonies. The Spaniards are continually spreading ridiculous rumours of the entire submission of the country; of large armies arriving, and of measures taken by European allies. Has Spain yet succeeded in persuading the colonies, contrary to every wish of the human heart—contrary to the plainest dictates of reason, that it would be better for them to continue her abject slaves, than to follow their own inclinations and be great and happy? Has she convinced them that slavery is better than freedom—that poverty is better than abundance—that to be ruled by another's will, is better than to pursue our own inclination—that to be robbed, is better than to be secured in our possessions—that to be shut up like felons

and denied all intercourse with other men, is the most agreeable condition of society ? If she has succeeded in these things, we may then presume that her power is again established.

These idle fabrications are now well understood to form a part of the system to which Spain has been driven, and are therefore no longer believed. We have little or no information from Mexico, that is not derived from Spanish authority, and therefore entirely unworthy of belief, excepting where it makes against themselves. According to their own account, all resistance in Mexico had ceased a year ago ; and yet we find that they still continue to gain the most splendid victories. The probability is, that the contest still prevails, and that the Spaniards are growing every day more feeble. It is now nine months since General Mina landed with a handful of men ; the first news we had of him from the Spaniards, was his total annihilation, and yet it now appears that he has hastily fled into the very heart of a populous country, at the head of four times the numbers with which he landed, with the intention of joining General Vittoria, a chief whose name has been heretofore concealed by the royalists ! But an intercepted letter written last November, by a bishop at Valladolid, describes the situation of the country to be such as we should naturally expect. His letter expresses the most complete despair—mentions several leaders who are in considerable force, and speaks of the whole country as having thrown off all restraint of government, and living free from the controul of Spain, whose armies can do no more than escape from one town to another, losing many of their numbers on the way. Torrents of blood have al-



ready been shed in the war of New Spain ; its inhabitants from the first, laboured under peculiar difficulties ; the only arms which they could procure, were wrenched from the hands of their oppressors ; they are still but badly armed, and without discipline, although becoming every day more formidable.

Should the South American patriots succeed at last in compelling the Spanish invaders to cease their attempts—to suffer them to remain in quietness, what will be the probable result ? Their enemies will of course say, that they will fall into dissensions and civil wars, and finally destroy each other. The same friendly anticipation was continually repeated respecting the United States ; and as it has turned out to be false in this instance, why may it not be false also with respect to South America ? It was said, amongst other silly things, that the difference of habits in the northern and southern sections of this country would produce hostility ; “ what ! ” exclaimed an American writer, “ do you suppose that because the people of New England sell cod-fish, and the Virginians tobacco, that they must therefore fight.” What causes of difference can exist, for instance, between Mexico and New Granada, or between them and the provinces south of the Amazons, or between the colonies east and west of the Cordilleras ? The long narrow Isthmus of Darien will always keep the two first at a distance from each other ; the vast tracts of country from the Orinoco to the Plata, and the extensive dominions of Portugal, as large as all Europe, which intervene, will form, if possible, a more complete separation. The Andes, not to be traversed at some seasons, and always a barrier more difficult to pass than the Pyrenees, if the inhabitants of



either side do not choose to open the way, will enable the Republic of the Pacific, at any time, to shut out the armies of the Atlantic side.

In fact the confused ideas which we have of the interior of South America, lead us into the strangest errors of opinion. The colonies of Spain now struggling for independence, are separated by nature into five distinct compartments, with much greater difficulties of intercourse than the United States with Mexico. This has been one great cause of their want of success. They are unable to co-operate or pursue a common plan. The provinces beyond the Isthmus, could have no communications with Mexico, and they were separated by impassible deserts of several thousand miles from Buenos Ayres, and still more from Chili. The character of the population of these distant compartments is also very different; the great number of civilized Indians or mixed races in Mexico, is an important feature; the provinces on the other side of the Isthmus, and along the Main, have a greater proportion of people of colour; while the inhabitants of the colonies on the side of the Brazils are composed like ourselves, of the descendants of Europeans chiefly; and on the Pacific, the population is of a kind still more homogeneous. We were continually in the habit of forming our opinions of American affairs, from the news we received from the contest in Granada or Venezuela, which had nothing more to do with the contest on the Plata and west of the Andes, than the war of India with that of Spain. It is in Granada and Venezuela, that the war, carried on by the royalists and the patriots, has assumed that shocking and exterminating cast of which so many instances are recited. It was here that Spain directed her greatest efforts; it is here we are

told the people are split and divided into factions among themselves—that they are fighting without concert or plan, under no common chief, and that they have yet established no regular government. It ought however to be considered, that this country had once been entirely in the possession of the patriots who had succeeded in establishing governments, which for two years went on with regularity ; but when Spain was free to throw in her whole disposable force, their cities were taken and their leading men basely assassinated. Would not our own country have exhibited a similar picture, if our patriots had been compelled to fly beyond the Alleghanies, and all the leaders of our revolution treacherously seized and put to death ? This was never the state of La Plata ; Chili for a time was overrun, but she has again risen, and in close alliance with La Plata, may safely bid defiance to Spain.

It will be said, however, that it will not be between these distant empires of Mexico, Granada, or La Plata, that dissensions are to be feared, but that in each particular province, factions, rivalries, contests for precedence, conflicting parties will have place. Such consequences, I admit, would probably be dangerous any where but in America. In Europe, if the nobility were permitted to indulge their ambition without restraint, the rivalries of different houses would naturally terminate in civil wars, and if nobles and kings were put down, mobs would rule ; but in America there are neither nobility nor mobs like those of Europe ; every man in a thinly inhabited country, counts something ; there are no *lazzaroni*, there are no miserable creatures “ who beg for leave to toil,” there are no materials for mercenary troops and standing armies, and the inhabitants scattered over a vast

surface of country, are not carried away by gusts of popular phrenzy, wrought up by the designing and ambitious. Ninty-nine out of a hundred of the European wars, have arisen from the intrigues and private feuds of families, and for causes in which, the nations had no concern, and nearly all the mobs, or popular commotions, have been occasioned by the want of bread. There is nothing in which the wise politicians of Europe are so apt to err, as in their application of experience derived entirely from their own countries, to a state of things altogether different. It is not to be expected, however, that the emancipated colonies are to settle down into sober order, and to form regular governments, without considerable fermentation. To establish governments, is not a matter easily effected under the most favourable circumstances; diversity of opinions, loud quarrels, and even partial recurrence to arms, are things to be expected. So great a work as that of the settling a form of government, cannot take place without considerable agitations. For twenty years after we became free, we were continually engaged in political dissentions, and Europe believed at one moment, that we were approaching the borders of despotism, and those of anarchy at another. Perhaps these very dissentions were proofs of political health. We have not been without our insurrections, our reign of terror, our plots to subvert the government, and our deportations. These things led people abroad to think that we were on the eve of dissolution, while in reality our government was gradually acquiring consistency, and our habits forming with it. Many things which were formerly subjects of dispute are now perfectly plain. Our progress in information has been inconceivable; there are more readers and



thinkers on politics in the United States than in all Europe; there is no American, no matter whether he resides in the remotest forest, or in the most obscure dell, who is not as regularly informed of every thing that passes in his own country, and abroad, as a minister of state. I have not a doubt, that great advancement has been made in South America since the commencement of their struggle; the mind which has been let loose, must have fallen upon those opinions and sentiments so congenial to the human heart. If this light has not yet penetrated the mass of society, it will in time, and in the mean while there will be sufficient numbers under its influence. The examples of the French revolution will teach them many things they must avoid, and ours will shew both things to be avoided and which may be safely followed. The Americans every where, are a sober reflecting people, mild and gentle in their manners, yet patient, courageous, and persevering. It is barely possible that the military chieftains, who now command the armies which oppose their invaders, should succeed in establishing some kind of limited monarchy; for despotism I consider impossible, where there is so large a portion of the well informed—a reason perhaps for the preservation of monarchy in Europe, but the reverse in America.

Under whatever government the five American empires may be placed, their condition must be rapidly ameliorated. But should they happily imitate the wise policy of the United States, in opening a free trade with all nations, receiving and tolerating all foreigners, they must rapidly increase in population, and all their resources will be quickly brought into action. They will attract the ingenious and enterprizing from every part of



the world; a spring will be given to their industry; plains, now uninhabited will be peopled; cities will rise, and improvements will be speedily effected throughout all the ramifications of society. The discovery of America will then indeed be complete. The United States, as being in the vicinity, will certainly be more permanently benefited; but Europe in general, and more particularly England, will derive incalculable advantages. *The time will come when Europe will visit America for the double purpose of enjoying her vast commerce and of finding a passage to the East; America will then be the centre of commercial attraction to the whole world.* We shall then verify the poetic prediction of Bishop BERKELEY :

“ Westward the course of empire takes its way,

“ The four first acts already past ;

“ A fifth shall close the drama with the day :

“ Time's noblest offspring is the last.”

This will be a mighty revolution not brought about by wars, by violence, by injustice, but one in which all will find an interest, and which will therefore be harmonious and peaceful. The change in the track of commerce to the East has three times produced the most surprising revolutions in the affairs of the civilized world; the Isthmus of Darien, that unfortunate wall, which three hundred years ago arrested the noble ardour of Columbus, will yet give way, and open a short and direct passage to Hindostan and China\*. This great

\* The following is extracted from the Edinburgh Review of Molina's account of Chili. It proves that the idea of a passage to the South Sea is not visionary, and at the same time shows how inconsistent is the policy of Spain with the great and permanent interests of the colonies and of the world:—

“ In the year 1805, a spherical chart of the sea of the Antilles, and of the coast of Terra Firma, from the Island of Trinidad to the Gulph

event may be long retarded by Spain, should Europe close her eyes to her true interests, and afford assistance to that rotten monarchy in the shocking work of putting back the colonies two centuries, by a system of extermination. These ideas may be thought visionary to some, but they will become history sooner than many imagine.

What would be the advantages to the United States from the independence of the Spanish colonies? I defy any one to point out a disadvantage. Have we not already found much benefit since the commencement of

of Honduras, was constructed in the hydrographical department, by order of the Spanish government, from scientific surveys. By this chart an important discovery was made. The bay of Mandinga, an immense inlet of the sea, commencing about ten leagues to the eastward of Porto Bello, penetrates into the Isthmus to within five leagues of the Pacific Ocean. This prodigious bason, which is almost closed by a chain of islands, running close to one another at the mouth, has never been navigated by any European except Spaniards, and was never supposed to run back to any considerable extent into the country, as all the old charts in which it is marked abundantly testify. A river, from the name of which the bay is denominated, falls into the bottom of the Gulf. This river is navigable, and we know comes very near a branch of the Chepo, a large river which falls into the Gulf of Panama.—We are not yet furnished with any satisfactory details on the navigable state of these rivers; but from what Alcedo tells us—*from the circumstances of their navigation being prohibited by the Spanish government under pain of death, on the express ground that it might discover the facility of the passage to the South Sea*; and from the fact of the buccaneers having actually penetrated from sea to sea in this direction, we are entitled to conclude that extraordinary facilities for the great enterprize are here presented. The bay has ten fathoms of water at the entrance, which increases to eleven in the middle, and it has six fathoms to the very bottom. The reviewers after proceeding to adduce some statements of Herrera, the famed historian of South America, draw the following conclusion:—By this indubitable authority, it appears, that a canal of nine leagues, through a country mostly flat, is all that is wanting to complete the navigation across the Isthmus of Panama.

“In the event of a complete and permanent independence of South America (an event highly probable) it is not unreasonable to expect, that within fifty years the North and South Seas will be connected. And what a stupendous revolution it would produce in navigation and commerce!—The distances to India and China would be shortened more than 10,000 miles.”

our revolution, from the vicinity of the Spanish provinces, notwithstanding the narrow, jealous, and restricted intercourse with them? And whence has this proceeded? From our commerce with them; from the market we found there for much of our surplus agricultural produce, and from the opportunity of taking their produce and selling it to other nations. Should we not then be gainers by the extension of this market? Let it be remembered that in the short period of twenty years, our population will, in all probability, amount to twenty millions; that manufactures will be much increased in the Eastern section of the Union; that our shipping will want employment; and that the increase in the demands of Europe, in all probability, will not keep pace with the increase in our surplus, but that we shall always find a ready and profitable market in free South America. Our country is peculiarly well situated to maritime enterprise; our two thousand miles of Atlantic coast are wonderfully penetrated with fine bays and inlets, and traversed by large rivers. We have already made the most surprising progress in maritime affairs; but since the peace in Europe, we are not able to enter into a competition with Europeans in commerce across the Atlantic; the West Indies and South America are the proper fields for our commerce, and the more those fields are enlarged the better it will be. New Spain, unquestionably the finest part of the new world, and destined by nature to be the richest part of America, and even now containing six millions of souls, is without a single sea port on the Atlantic, and can scarcely ever own a ship; her trade must therefore be carried on by us, who are her next door neighbours. This alone would indemnify us for the loss of the carrying trade. Our northern ship owners are



much more nearly interested in their independence than they may imagine. As respects other parts of South America, we should at least enter into a fair competition with the English, and perhaps even possess considerable advantage from our vicinity.

There is another consideration deserving attention. There may be in many things *a common American continental interest, in opposition to an European interest*. I am no advocate for the visionary idea of a great American Congress on the Isthmus, but there may exist an understanding upon a variety of subjects of general concern. The weight and importance of each state will be wonderfully increased by this vicinage of independent states, even if there should be no alliance. The United States are at present a single isolated power, and the monarchs across the Atlantic are under no apprehensions that other nations will make a common cause with us when our rights are violated. Suppose, for example, the existence of several governments on this continent, entirely free from any connection with Europe, and completely beyond her controul—beyond the vortex of any of her primary interests, would the British, or any other government, in this case, have set at naught the rights of neutrals? No, she would have placed too high a value on the good will of America to have sported with them so lightly.

It was for this reason that we rejoiced at the establishment of an independent American sovereignty in the Brazils. We entertained hopes that this sovereignty, as American, would be friendly to us. We had reason to believe, from the reception of our agents, that we should not be disappointed. We found, however, that during the late war (from the nature of his relations with Eng-



land) the King of the Brazils *leaned rather to the side of our enemy*. We are not in the habit of violating the rights of others, at the same time we do not easily forget injuries; it seemed to us that the affair of the privateer Armstrong, at Fayal, did not excite that sensation at the Brazilian court which it ought to have excited. For this, however, I am disposed to make allowance; and the appointment as Minister to this government, of a man who had made our country his choice, who was on terms of friendship with many of our most distinguished fellow-citizens, who was supposed to be too much a republican for Europe, had the appearance of complimenting our institutions, and seeking a friendly understanding. It must now be the interest of the King of the Brazils to make his country flourish, and the sooner he gets rid of his European possessions the better. I must confess I felt hurt at the manner in which the late insurrection was noticed in our newspapers. I should not be surprized, if to the Brazilian court it should have appeared a conclusive proof of the deepest enmity towards it, on the part of this country. Now, I do not see what greater right we have to be ill natured towards a government because its form is monarchical, than such government has to be inimical to us because we are a republic; at least, if we display this temper towards others, we have no right to complain that it is manifested towards us. With respect to the insurrection at Pernambuco, we were led into an error, by confounding it with the struggle of the Patriots, while their situation and their cause were, in fact, very different; whatever we may think of the *form*, the Brazilians had already obtained the great object for which the Americans are contending—a *government within themselves*. The affair of Pernambuco was nothing more than

the revolt of an adjoining province, and we had no more right to intermeddle with it than with a French or English insurrection. It is by confounding things in this manner that the cause of the Patriots is injured.

The independence of America from Europe is the first great object to be attained. Compared to this every consideration is of minor importance. The establishment of governments, founded on the most free and liberal principles, inasmuch as this must tend to our own happiness, the happiness of our fellow men, and the more rapid improvement of America, is certainly the next thing to be desired. The independence and freedom of this continent are two things we should, as far as is practicable, consider as inseparable; yet, if any part of South America should adopt forms not agreeable to our notions, it would be the height of arrogance on our part to decline their friendship, and ridiculous to make war upon them on that account. It would be highly offensive and insulting on our part to dictate to any people the kind of government they ought to adopt; true republican liberality forbids it. I must confess we are too much in the habit of intermeddling with the interior concerns of other nations. Let us cherish our own institutions; but we may do this with less boasting of ourselves, or fault-finding with others. In case of the adoption of constitutions by the Patriots, formed on principles somewhat liberal, we need not fear but that both our own enterprising and intelligent countrymen and the individual Englishmen who visit those countries, will give them useful hints in the establishment of their governments. They will have to do, principally, with the two nations to whom the true principles of free government are best known in theory and practice. There is every reason to believe

that we shall unite in the most perfect harmony with the subjects of Great Britain in effecting this noble work. I am under no apprehensions that my countrymen will be unable to enter into a fair competition with the English; these will perhaps reap the first crop from the independence of South America, but we shall obtain a much more solid and permanent footing. In us the Patriots can much more fully and safely confide, as entertaining wishes for their welfare very different from those of England, which will desire their prosperity for the sake of enjoying their commerce; while over and above this selfish motive, we desire it for the sake of more important considerations, and which will be mutual; besides, we receive a pleasure and feel a sympathy which others cannot know, from the sight of colonies engaged in a contest similar to the one of which we form our pride and boast. We wish them success, because they are endeavouring to free themselves from Europe—because they are Americans, and because their success and happiness will afford additional security to our own. We ought not to be jealous of the English because they assist the Patriots; we should rejoice at it. The Patriots are sufficiently aware that the English have a boundless ambition, that they are desirous of having possessions in every part of the globe; they know at the same time, that we have no colonies, and never will have any; that our only ambition is to fill up the territory we already possess, or which we claim, and to enjoy a fair commerce with other parts of the world. The charge made against us of entertaining ambitious views, similar to those of European nations, is too ridiculous to deserve a refutation. We have a fixed boundary given us by the consent of European nations themselves, beyond which neither our



wishes nor the nature of our government will permit us to stray. Within that boundary, we are ambitious to improve the lands which at this time are lying waste, by which the whole human family will be as much benefited as ourselves. Our war in Canada was not a war for the sake of extending our territory, it was for our own safety, and for the sake of future peace. It is questionable whether we should accept it now, if offered to us for nothing. And who is it that thus accuse us of ambitious designs? They are foxes and wolves who are preaching. This will not deceive the Patriots of South America; they will confide in us.

The preponderance of the United States in the affairs of America, will be a natural one, and which can give no offence; it will arise from being the elder state, from having a more numerous, a more homogeneous, a more active, and in general, a more enlightened population; from a greater disinterestedness, regard to justice, and love of peace. *The United States will be the natural head of the New World.* Having already a government well consolidated, proved, and settled down, holding a distinguished rank in the world, advancing with amazing rapidity, they must far outstrip any of the American empires. Mexico, it is true, may one day vie with us in some respects, but being necessarily a mere inland state, she never can be equal to us in strength; it will be long before the Brazils, provinces of La Plata, New Granada, Chili, and Peru, or other parts of South America, which cannot coalesce, will be able to overtake us. In stretching the vision into futurity, we look in vain for those causes of war which continually desolate Europe; if systems like our own are established, where peace is the great end of all our wishes, where the happiness of society alone is consulted, and not the vanity of privileged fa-



milies, we may live a thousand years without a quarrel. *If all the nations in the world were governed by the same principles that we are, there would be an end to wars.*

The patriots have, at this moment, agents near all the courts of Europe. We have been told that they have made propositions to some of them incompatible with the very object they are struggling for. We should be on our guard against their enemies, who will be very busy in circulating stories to their disadvantage. It is natural that the patriots should be desirous of conciliating the nations of Europe—at least, prevail on them to remain neutral. I believe they have little to fear; neither European interest, nor inclination, nor honour, leads to take part with Spain in the hellish work of extermination, carried on by this wretched monarchy. They know well the disposition of this country; from us they have nothing to fear. It might be doubted how much French influence or English influence there might have been here, but *certainly there never was much Spanish influence.* It is, therefore, natural that the Patriots should be chiefly solicitous to render the European nations passive. I firmly believe that this will be the case; they all sincerely join with us in wishing the independence of South America; and whatever they might feel themselves bound to do for Spain, in case we took a part in the contest, they will certainly not be disposed to undertake the odious task of executioners, without something of this kind to justify the interference. In my opinion, they will not interfere under any circumstances; for surely, what cannot be the interest of any one singly, cannot be the interest of all conjointly; and it is not their interest to oppose the emancipation of America. But if not disposed to consent that we shall be directly instrumental in

effecting its independence, they at least expect of us to acknowledge the independence of such as have fairly earned it. *It is very evident that we must be, and should be proud to be, the first to acknowledge the independence of South America, or any part of it, whenever it may be achieved, now, or ten years hence.* It is probable, that some of the European powers, having objects to answer, may sport with the credulity of Spain; the agents of Spain may whisper that her cause is to be espoused by the great congress, but these tricks will deceive none but themselves.

In what condition are the European powers to render her assistance? And if they be the first to do this, shall we be idle? We can render more assistance to the Patriots than all Europe can render to Spain. The fact is, the European states are in no condition to render such assistance. A sort of mysterious phrase has lately been introduced, for the purpose of alarming our people with some indescribable danger, some "deed without a name."—It is said, our conduct is "narrowly watched," that we are regarded "with no friendly eye," that "Europe is jealous of us."—How long is it since this language was got up? But a short time since, we were "a patch-work republic," a "heterogeneous jarring mass," continually on the point of falling to pieces in consequence of our political dissensions, weak and despicable as a nation, and therefore every where to be insulted with impunity. Now, it seems, we are to be narrowly watched; we have become dangerous to Europe.—Ever running from one extreme into another, it appears that those who speak of us, are at all times equally removed from truth. The former set of opinions respecting us, have all been found erroneous; we have shewn the world that we are not a

miserable patch-work, that we can be united, that our government has a sufficient energy when circumstances call for it, and that our political squabbles are proofs of health, and not of disease; they now, therefore, call us the *Great Republic*, and pretend to think that we are becoming dangerous. Yes, and we are dangerous; but it is to those who declare themselves our enemies, and do us wrong. Lawless and unprincipled individuals will be found in every nation; but the true character of the American government and people, is a scrupulous regard to the principles of justice, and a love of honourable peace. What, for instance, would have been the conduct of any of the powers of Europe, in our situation, towards Spain for the last fifteen years? Would any of them have patiently borne, as we did, the aggressions and insults of that monarchy, when we had the means of redress so completely in our power? What European government would have forborne, like ours, to take possession of the Floridas and the province of Texas? Had France or England been in our situation, the territories which we claim by the right of cession, and to which, all but the Spaniards themselves, now admit that we are entitled, would have been taken possession of long ago. East Florida would have been sequestered on the double ground of the villainous spoliations of our commerce, and the conduct of Spain in permitting our enemy to make war upon us from it. Had we been governed by the ambition of either of those nations, we should have sent ten thousand men into Mexico, and supplied the patriots of that unhappy country with arms, and thus at once have plucked the brightest gem from the Spanish crown—we should have completed the revolution in Granada and Venezuela, and set free Peru and Chili, as well as La



Plata. All this we had in our power to effect, and I question much, whether twenty years hence, we shall not repent of having been too scrupulous, too desirous of maintaining a character for justice and self-denial, among nations who disregard both. Far from complaining, Spain ought to be thankful to us.

It seems, however, that Europe is *now* watching us. What have we to fear from Europe, or Europe from us, to occasion this watching? Neither can harbour the folly of an invasion, and in a maritime war we can do her more harm than she can do us. Europe will not take our bread, our cotton, our tobacco! We in turn can refuse to take her cloths, silks, and wine; and who would be the gainer? It is said, that our republic furnishes a *dangerous example of successful rebellion*, which must be put down. If this indeed be the case, and Europe is about to send over a fleet of two thousand sail, and three hundred thousand men, to put down America, let us prepare for this mighty invasion—let us drive out Spain from the continent, and form a chain of confederacies with the Patriots! Such notions are too visionary to be gravely advanced. There was a time, when even the sagacious Talleyrand was of opinion that *any kind of war would shake us to pieces*, not from any violence from without, but from explosions amongst ourselves. That time is gone by. The eyes of the European governments are opened. They know well that their political institutions are founded on a state of things very different from what exists in America; that the example of America may give rise to gradual ameliorations, but not to convulsions. They know that they will find it much more to their advantage to trade with us peaceably, than to attempt the visionary project of invading us. There will still, how-



ever, in spite of the clearest reasoning, remain some beclouded minds, to cherish a morbid and gloomy pleasure in contemplating spectres without shape or form, wrapt up in mists and fogs. It is in vain to attempt to divest them of these fears which prevent them from marching in the path which our interests point out.—Must we cower at the name of Europe, as if she were capable of stretching some magic wand over us? The last war ought to have taught us to know ourselves a little better. We are not a petty state alongside of Europe, but a mighty empire, placed at such a distance, as to require twice the force that would be necessary to invade England herself. We are not on an island easily overrun, we inhabit a vast continent—we are *not part froth and part dregs*, but ten millions of the most effective and intelligent people, taken as a body, in the world! devotedly fond of our country and political institutions, united and enthusiastic in their defence. There is, moreover, far less diversity in the manners, habits, and language of our people, than is usually supposed abroad; we meet, occasionally, individuals of all nations, but there is a wonderful similarity in the natives of this extensive country. In England, or France, one meets a different description of people in every canton or county; but in travelling over all America we shall find in the general population little more than inconsiderable shades of difference, arising from local circumstances. We are unexhausted in our resources, while Europe is bending under the weight of burthens, and the internal situations of France, England, and Spain, are the most deplorable. They might with some reason fear us, if we were a lawless banditti like the first Romans; but happily for the world, we are not; and while our republican institutions remain pure and incorrupt, Europe

will have nothing to fear from us, not even when our population shall amount to fifty millions, as it certainly will, in the natural course of things, in half a century. We rose from the late war with England like a giant refreshed; our strength has increased at least ten-fold. What then have we to fear when our course is marked out by justice? Let us do what we believe in conscience to be right, and leave the consequences to Heaven.

It is as much the interest of England to aid the Patriots as it is ours. We ought not, therefore, to allow narrow jealousies to prevent us from concurring with them in the work of liberation. Notwithstanding all the *intrigues* of the English, we shall occupy the first place in the esteem and confidence of the Patriots, and we ought not to desire more than an equal chance of trading with them. If the English have rendered them essential service, it is but just that they should be rewarded; it surely cannot be the wish of any generous American that the English should be excluded. All that we ought to ask of the Patriots is, to be placed on an equal footing. But on this important occasion, I should like to see, for the honour of my countrymen, something like disinterested generosity, a noble and elevated zeal for the happiness of the human race, and for the glory of America—and not a dwarfish selfishness. There is no doubt but that the Patriots are chiefly indebted to the English for the means with which they have been successful in throwing off the Spanish yoke. It is, indeed, paying but a poor compliment to the Patriots, to suppose that they are led by the nose by the English merchants among them. The jealousy with respect to the English in this country is natural, it can be easily traced; it is time, however, that it should be laid aside, *for we may now,*

AT LAST, *indulge a friendly feeling towards England with safety.* It is, in fact, mingling a topic of the politics of the United States with a question of infinite importance to the world, that ought to be considered in the most liberal manner; before we can properly comprehend with the eye a field so vast, we must rise above the little mists and fogs that obscure the objects which lie below. The common-place topics of newspaper politics should be cast aside.

It is equally wrong in us, to pretend to take sides in the political disputes which must occur in La Plata, as well as in other republics. I should think it a much more unfavourable symptom, if there were no such disputes. We, however, can be no judges in the case, who is in the right or who is in the wrong, from the want of opportunity of obtaining a perfect knowledge of the facts. But I am asked, “have we not facts that are incapable of explanation, and which prove the government of La Plata to be a mere military despotism? Do we not know of the deportation of the Patriots of Buenos Ayres, and the treatment of Carrera? Are not these facts which no one can defend? Has not the conduct of Puerrydon been that of a tyrant?” Alas! have we learned nothing from experience—have we so soon forgotten the nature of the accusation brought against our own government both at home and abroad? If Puerrydon has been called a tyrant, Mr. Madison has been called a Caligula; if Puerrydon is said to be the tool of the Portuguese, our republican administrations have been charged with acting in subserviency to Napoleon. Whence does this proceed but from ill will, and a partial view of facts? Let us try if we cannot *imagine* an explanation of the conduct of the supreme director.—Suppose a few warm, zealous, enthu-



siastic men, should sincerely and honestly believe, that the director was about to sell their country, and listening more to passion than prudence, should form a plot to depose him by force—that the director, informed of this, instead of bringing them to trial, should think it most adviseable in the present state of things, to have them arrested and sent out of the country? Here is nothing improbable. I am far from insinuating that any thing of this kind has happened, I am only arguing to prove that we do not know what has happened. Without making any reflections on the unfortunate individuals who have excited our sympathy in this country, (and with several of whom I have had the pleasure of an acquaintance, and cheerfully bear testimony to their truly generous and patriotic sentiments) it is possible that these men may have mistaken a desire on the part of Puerrydon to avoid war with the Portuguese, for a determination to betray their country\*. I regret much the injury which the nascent government of La Plata has sustained in our country in consequence of this affair. Yet we have heard of nothing like insurrections or civil war in La Plata; on the contrary, the last arrivals bring us accounts of the most admirable demonstrations of public feeling, in which all seem to unite. The affair even of Carrera may be explained. This Patriot arrived at Buenos Ayres, with the means of organizing a private

\* A singular mistake has been made in our newspapers, and shows how careful we ought to be in these cases. In the note or rescript of the supreme director, assigning the cause of the deportation, these men are said to possess *ideas exaltadas*. What! exclaim the editors, banish men for possessing exalted ideas, lofty and noble sentiments! But the fact is, the words mean in Spanish, and also in the French, directly the reverse; they mean violent, seditious, unruly, dangerous, hot headed, &c. It is but just to notice this, at the same time, I should be very far from wounding the feelings of strangers, who deserve our hospitality, by insinuating that they merited these epithets.



expedition for the emancipation of his country, at the very moment when the forces of La Plata were about to accomplish the same object, and when it was highly necessary that all parties in Chili should act in concert. At such a moment, it might have been deemed impolitic to permit an individual of such influence as Carrera, whose views were unknown, and probably basely misrepresented, to interfere, perhaps endanger the success of an undertaking so important. At all events, it is not for us to decide in the hasty manner that many of us have done. Have we had no party broils among ourselves, that we should thus haughtily condemn? There is still a charge against Puerrydon of being at the head of a military despotism, or *republic*, as some have called it. I put it to the good sense of any one—in such a state of things, who is likely to be the military despot, the one who is at the head of the civil government, or the man who has the command of the army, who has dazzled the people by brilliant success, who is received in the different cities through which he passes, with triumphs and every demonstration of public admiration? *This man is St. Martin, the Liberator of Chili!* When to his good fortune and talents he adds the character of a virtuous man, is it reasonable to suppose that he will not be looked to as the first man of the republic? What has been related to me of this Chief, leads me almost to believe that South America, too, has her Washington. When St. Martin restored Chili to liberty and independence, he was tendered the supreme directorship by the Cabildo, but this he magnanimously declined, declaring that his business was completed, that he was about to leave them to form a government for themselves! To avoid the public honours which were preparing for him at St. Jago, he

stole out, unobserved, on his return to Buenos Ayres, but was overtaken by a deputation, requesting him, at least, to accept the sum of twenty thousand dollars, for the purpose of bearing his expenses; this he positively refused. On his approach to Buenos Ayres, every preparation was made by the inhabitants to receive him in the most distinguished manner; twenty thousand people waited on the road at which he was to enter! The Chilians, in one of the first acts of their government, voted a sum of money to repay the republic of La Plata the expense of the expedition, and then, by consent of the latter, took the army into their own service; St. Martin returned to assume the command, and the manner in which he was received by the grateful inhabitants of St. Jago has been detailed in our newspapers—it was not unlike the reception given to our own Washington in Philadelphia. It is only in popular governments that a real triumph can ever take place; it is only here that this genuine and highest of all earthly rewards can await the virtuous and the brave. The independent republic of La Plata and Chili, through St. Martin, have in all probability, by this time, given liberty and independence to their brethren of Peru.

Although the sentiments in favour of the Patriots, through the United States, is almost universal, and seems to become each day more earnest, yet there are a few who pretend to advocate a cold indifference, and even speak of the Patriots in the same terms that our enemies, during our revolutionary war, used to speak of us. The Patriots are called rebels, insurgents, and we are gravely advised to hold them in contempt. I would ask how long is it since we have got up a little in the world, that we should thus look down upon our poor relations? Can we bestow epithets upon these men without, at the same

time, casting the severest reproach upon ourselves? No, —they are now, as we once were, nobly contending against oppressors or invaders, in a cause sanctified by justice—in a cause more just than ours; for where we had *one* reason to complain, they had *ten thousand*\*. This cold blooded indifference to the fate of our fellow men, is unworthy of us. We sympathized with the Spaniards when lawlessly invaded by France;

\* I have refrained from entering into the question of the right of the colonies to declare themselves independent of Spain. Never was there a cause more easily supported. On the side of Spain there is nothing but lawless force. On an attentive examination of the English writers against our right to declare ourselves independent of the British government, I find these things distinctly admitted by them as incontrovertible: that the relative condition of the colony to the colonizing state, is not the same as that of a mere province, it partakes more of that of allies, and having distinct interests from the mother country, may lawfully throw off its authority, which a province, under no circumstances, can. "As the colonies were not conveyed to distant countries, in order to be made slaves, or to be subjected to the peevishness or oppression of the parent state, if they thought themselves exposed to such treatment, they might renounce their allegiance, claim independence, and apply to any foreign commonwealth for aid." These are the very words of one of the ablest and most strenuous advocates for Great Britain. It entered the head of no one, at the time, to argue, that nothing would justify the revolt of the colony. Our declaration of independence begins with laying down principles, which were universally agreed to as self-evident. From the nature of the case, the colony must be permitted to judge whether it has been abused or not; it would be ridiculous to allow nothing more than an appeal to the oppressor. When all hope of redress has vanished, they may lawfully take up arms, and any nation, according to Vattel, may lawfully assist them; although it would not be lawful to assist a revolted province, the colony may "appeal to the world for the rectitude of its intentions." It would be insulting to any man of common sense, to attempt to prove that the American colonies have not had ample cause of complaint. It has never been denied; Spain has never condescended to say more than that these are her subjects, her slaves, and that she has a right to oppress or murder them according to her pleasure. It was also admitted, that when the parent state could not protect itself, but was obliged to abandon the colonies to themselves for a time, it could never regain its authority without the consent of the colonies. Never was there a more complete dereliction, than that of the Spanish colonies for at least three years. The existing governments were every where mere usurpations, for the source from which their power was derived, had been dried up, and their responsibility had entirely ceased.



we sympathized with Russia ; we now sympathize with France ; and have we no feeling for our brethren of the South ?—Those who inculcate this apathy tell us that since we are happy and contented, we ought to be indifferent to all the rest of the human race ! If this sentiment is really serious, and not a mere concealment of enmity to the Patriots, it is despicable—it is unworthy of any one who wears the form of man. According to the these, a wise nation ought to stifle all the finer feelings of human nature—it ought to have no charity but for itself ; base selfishness should be every thing ; and generosity, patriotism, liberty, independence, empty and ridiculous words. Such sentiments may become the wretch who will not spare, from his superabundant store, a mite to prevent his neighbour from perishing ; but there are but few Americans, I believe, who harbour meanness like this. It does not follow that, because these sentiments are indulged, we must become Quixotic, and involve ourselves in war on account of mere religious or political opinions. I am no advocate of French fraternization ; but I am not therefore to condemn every generous feeling that glows in the bosoms of those who wish well to the patriot cause. I would wish to see our conquests the conquests of reason and benevolence, and not of arms. There is nothing to forbid our feeling a generous sympathy with the Patriots of South America ; a contemptuous indifference on our part, would be regarded by them as reproachful to our national character, and would lay the foundation of lasting hatred.

It does not follow, I repeat, that we should make a common cause with them, and go to war with Spain on their account ; this might injure us both. Although I should not fear the result, it might be more prudent to



leave the colonies to contend with Spain without interference; and I am convinced no European nation will interfere in her favour. This country has no reason to be afraid of a war, but at the same time none to desire it; peace is our true policy, though not carried so far as to render our steps timid and cowardly. We ought not to be prevented from doing what may be agreeable to us and to our interest, by apprehension of unjust and unlawful violence from the universe; we are now strong enough to pursue any just and reasonable deportment as respects ourselves and others, without dread of consequences. What then ought we to do? I say at once, *to establish official relations with the republics of La Plata and Chili*. No nation will have any just right to be offended with this. Our own practice, as well as the practice of every other country, considers the existence of a government *de facto* as sufficient for all purposes of official communications. We never hesitated to establish relations with the revolutionary governments of France, neither did any of the European powers. In the great commonwealth of nations, each one has a right to choose the government or governments with which to establish such relations; other nations have no more right to take offence at this than one citizen has with another for the choice of his associate. The recognition of the republic of La Plata does not imply that we must make war against Spain, or aid the republic in case it should be invaded. It is not inconsistent with the strictest neutrality; most certainly it is no act of hostility. There is not the least danger that Spain will seriously consider it *a cause of war*; she may bluster, *but she holds too deep a stake to think of striking the first blow*. As long as she possesses colonies in America, if there is ever a war between us, it must commence on our side.

It is, as respects ourselves, that we should have any, hesitation in acknowledging the independence of La Plata, and not because we should infringe any rights of Spain. There is nothing in the laws of nations to forbid it; and she can lay but poor claim to our friendship. The questions we should ask in this affair, are these: Are the republics just mentioned of such a character as that we should let ourselves down by a treaty of amity with them? What is the extent of their territory—the number of their population—the nature of their governments? Are they capable of defending themselves? Is Spain in possession of any part of their territory? These and other questions might be put to satisfy ourselves before we venture to take them by the hands as friends. This course will be found to accord perfectly with our principles and practice. What, for instance, was our conduct to Spain herself? Where there happens to be at the same time, in the same empire, two or more governments, we may treat with all, or any one, or none, but this is a matter which concerns only ourselves. To treat with all would subject us to great inconvenience; to treat with any one would have the appearance of partiality; for our own sake, therefore, the best course would be to acknowledge none of them. Thus, when the whole Spanish monarchy was actually split into three parts, King Joseph on the throne, the Cortes endeavouring to expel him, and the colonies setting up for themselves, our government declined acknowledging any of these parties. When the Cortes prevailed, we received the Minister of Ferdinand, and acknowledged the government *de facto*; but we declined receiving the Minister of the colonies for two reasons; first, because the contest was not yet properly at an end, therefore, from motives of prudence we could not think of forming a compact which might

prove to be ineffectual; secondly, because the existing governments might not have been of such respectability as that we could place ourselves on a footing with them consistently with the respect due to ourselves. But when these causes ceased, the reasons for our not establishing relations would cease also, if we should regard them as not disreputable to us. The different provinces of South America have not made a common cause, and from their distance it is impossible they could act together. Mexico, Granada, Venezuela, La Plata, Chili, have all declared themselves in the most formal manner separate and independent governments; should any of them, therefore, succeed in expelling the Spanish authorities, and in establishing governments *de facto*, in pursuance of our own practice and principles, we may venture to establish relations with them, provided we are satisfied that there is a sufficient character and stability to justify us in doing so consistently with prudence.

✓ A revolted province notoriously incapable of maintaining itself ought not to be treated with; but an independent nation notoriously capable of maintaining itself, ought to be respected. Yet we have a right to receive and hear the mission even of a revolted province without violating the laws of nations. What more common than for the revolted subjects, or the deposed prince of one nation, to fly to another and to be openly and publicly received? Who ever heard of a sovereign forbidding all nations from holding any intercourse with his revolted subjects on pain of violating the laws of nations? The strictest neutrality is not violated by affording shelter and protection, much less from the exchange of civilities or the establishment of official relations, for the convenience of commercial intercourse. Is all intercourse or relation forbidden, or some particular kind only? For instance, no



one ever thought that the mere trading with a revolted colony or province was an offence, *or that this would be good cause of capture*; and if it be lawful to trade, is it not lawful to establish such understanding with the temporary or local authorities as may be necessary for the regulation of such trade? May we not have resident agents for this purpose? May we not receive theirs in turn; and may we not, if we think it advisable, enter into verbal or written stipulations to regulate this intercourse? Whether such agents should be called consuls or ministers, or commissioners; whether they enter into stipulations or treaties of amity and commerce or not, is of no importance.

Are there any of the American republics with which we can with safety enter into official relations, or form treaties of amity and commerce? The United Provinces of La Plata are undoubtedly such. For seven years they have had complete and undisturbed possession of their country—no attempt has been made or is likely to be made to subdue them, and after this lapse of time, if Spain were to attempt it, she could be considered in no other light than as an invader. We look only to the government *de facto*; the maxim of Spain—once a colony always a colony, is one which she must settle with the colonies as well as she can; for us it is enough that there is in La Plata a complete expulsion of the Spanish authorities, and an existing government. It will not be pretended by the most extravagant advocates of Spain, that because she has revolted colonies elsewhere, which she is trying to subdue, *that those which she is too weak to attempt* ought to be regarded as connected with the rest, and that all other nations must wait until she announces, in a formal manner, that she can no longer hope to subjugate any of them. According to this reasoning, while Spain



continues to hold a single inch of land in America, the colonies must still be considered in a state of revolt.

Consistently therefore with the strictest neutrality, we may acknowledge La Plata, at least, as an independent state. By this simple act we shall ensure to ourselves the lasting friendship of all the Patriots of South America, whose feelings must be in unison with their brethren of La Plata. It will inspire confidence in all who are engaged in the contest, it will animate every Patriot with a new zeal, it will bestow a respectability upon the cause in their own eyes, which will cheerfully unite all hearts in support of their independence. Such was the feeling which the recognition of our independence produced. As the natural head of America, it will instantly increase our importance in the eyes of the world. Spain may be induced at last to put a stop to the horrid effusion of human blood, and renounce an undertaking in which she never can prevail. An understanding with the Patriot governments of South America will also enable us to make such arrangements as may put a stop to many practices and abuses, in which our character as a nation is deeply interested.

I have thus, Sir, taken a rapid glance at a subject highly important to the present and future interests of this country. In common with my fellow-citizens, I give my warmest wishes for the success of the Patriot cause, but at the same time value too highly the *real happiness* of my country to put it to hazard by rash and inconsiderate measures. Scarcely any period of our history ever called for a more wise and deliberate judgment and enlightened foresight than the one now fast approaching. Happily for us there prevails at this juncture a degree of harmony among our citizens or political subjects, much greater than at any period since the establishment of our consti-

tution, and we have a wise and upright statesman at the helm. It was given to our immortal Washington to achieve the independence of one half of America, and I most sincerely hope it may be yours to acknowledge the independence of the other.

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## POSTSCRIPT.

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The following extract from "Bell's Weekly Messenger," appeared in our newspapers after the foregoing had gone to press.—It coincides so completely with many ideas I have expressed, that I have resolved to avail myself of it as adding weight to them. I have little doubt it speaks the sentiments of the British government; if so, England will not remain quiet and permit Russia to interfere in behalf of Spain; she has too much to gain by teaching the people of South America to make use of her manufactures. There is immense wealth in South America; and if there were a free communication with England, the inhabitants would be able to purchase much more than the United States. It is a fact, that all goods of European manufacture sell in South America for at least four times the prices of the United States, and in many places for much more. In the extract, the evils arising from the monopoly of the colonial commerce are extremely well expressed in few words.—The fate of Mexico is what I most fear: the last efforts of Spain will be directed to retain it. But, thanks to the obstinacy of Ferdinand, not many years will go round before we shall give him a little trouble on that score.

"As to the second point, we have, indeed, known that a negotiation has been long pending between Spain and England to induce the latter power to afford an active

assistance against the Spanish independents. The question for the English ministry in this negotiation is two-fold—the right of such interference and the policy of it. With respect to the right, we have no hesitation in saying that it will not admit a doubt. It is an acknowledged principle in the European law of nations, that any one nation may assist another to subdue revolted colonies or provinces—the treaty with Spain justifies such an interposition. With respect to the question of right, therefore, there is no doubt. The English ministry may in this respect act as they please. The point therefore is reduced to the mere question of policy.

“ Upon this head we have been so copious in some of our former papers that we have here little to add. South America is a new country and in its first agricultural stage, and therefore *naturally* the most promising and beneficial customer to an old country. They possess in abundance, or may possess under due encouragement, all that we want, raw materials, cotton, sugar, &c.; and they want, and as they increase in population, will increase in the want, of all that we possess—manufactures. Such a dealer is the sure material of wealth and aggrandizement to an old commercial country; and hence, the value of the United States to us. But under the Spanish monopoly, the produce, consumption, and trade, of such a country, are necessarily repressed within the lowest possible limits. Every thing comes to them so dear, that they can consume but little; and the mother country, (having the monopoly of purchase) buys so little, and buys it so cheaply, as to detain agriculture always in its infancy, from the want of encouragement. Hence, under such a monopoly, such colonies are little more than kitchen gardens to their own mother countries, of little use to them, and of none to the general commerce of the world.



“Under such circumstances, *it is the most manifest policy of England not to maintain and encourage the union of Spain and her colonies, and most assuredly not to lend any active assistance to this end.* It is a duty of our direct alliance with Spain not to assist the Independents. *It is a duty of prudence, resulting from our commercial policy, not to assist the mother country.* Let them fight it out, and let us hope for that happy result which without destroying the principles of religion and morality, *will extend the compass of the English commerce.*

“Upon these principles we cannot persuade ourselves to give any weight to the articles put forth in the Madrid Journals.—It is, perhaps, one of those articles which the editors have been taught to form by their late French masters. It is a known artifice amongst the Parisian editors to take their wishes for granted, and to insinuate the reasonableness of their expectations in the impossibility of their being disappointed. According to our own humble opinion, the present ministry are too well acquainted with commercial principles (and particularly Lord Liverpool) to have two wishes or opinions upon the subject. *Our clear interest is for the success of the cause of the Independents.*”

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That a more perfect idea may be formed of the interest excited in the United States in favour of the South American struggle, the English editor has subjoined the following, extracted from an American paper, under the head of POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES :—

“In considering the state of our southern neighbours, it must be just to recollect our own thoughts in such great perils. The records of our history are ‘that the first step of the Congress, after the declaration of independence, was to send Mr. Silas Deane to France, to request



permission of the French ministry to purchase in France, arms and military stores for an army. From the reception of Mr. Deane, Congress perceived that France was favourable to their cause, and they immediately appointed Dr. Franklin their minister at Paris, with full powers.' A ship, mounting 36 guns, was provided to carry him. He was at Nantz on the 13th of December, 1776, and two prizes were taken on the passage, and carried into Nantz and sold. An English writer says, 'the public fact of Dr. Franklin's arrival in France, and the fact of the French ministry permitting these prizes to be sold in a French port, were indisputable proofs of hostility to Great Britain. But the ministers of Great Britain were afraid of a war with France, and France, not being prepared for war, chose to temporize. Dr. Franklin was honoured privately with all the countenance he could expect. Two months after the surrender of General Burgoyne, the French entered into an alliance with the Americans, offensive and defensive. When this measure had taken place, the British ministry made several attempts to open a negociation with Dr. Franklin, but they were too late.' The importance of these events in the American revolution can never be forgotten, and they may serve to direct our policy, whenever our interest and our duty may combine in the affairs of any other people struggling for just liberty with good hopes of gaining it. The same spirit which sought and justified this negociation, vindicated the zeal of military adventures. Kosciusko, whose talents and education had gained him favour in Europe, dictated by his personal affairs, left Europe. He came to America, and offered himself a volunteer to General Washington. This great man knew the value of the gift, and gave him an honourable appointment, and no man has refused to confess that his

bravery and his humanity rendered important services to the United States. After peace was settled, he found in the bosom of his country an home which had not become less happy from the reputation he had gained in the cause of liberty. These services have been the subject of many a Eulogy in the United States, and the history of this hero is inseparable from the history of our independence. Our expectations from the Netherlands, who had suffered in the defence of their own liberties, emboldened Congress to expect their support, and forbid any delay to seek it. The appointment of Henry Laurens, the former President of the Continental Congress, discovered what honour was associated with a commission entrusted to a citizen of his great reputation, from his private virtues, his experience, and his patriotism. If he did not enter upon the duty of his trust, the appointment discovered the purpose of his country, and the history of his treatment in captivity will explain the importance of his commission in the opinion of the public enemy. Mr. Adams succeeded in this commission, and in friendship with Spain and France, our political hopes prepared us for our final success. The Empress of Russia, though not prepared to give a full welcome to a minister from the American Congress, yet she gave those indulgencies which amply rewarded the attention paid to her, and encouraged the defence of our independence.

“ At the time of sending a minister to the Hague, Governor Trumbull expressed a wish to conciliate the favour and encourage the emigration of the people of Europe. The only obstacle, says he, which I foresee to the settlement of foreigners in our country, will be the taxes, and he adds what he thinks it proper to lessen them. We give the following thought, in his own words, addressed to a person in Holland:—‘ In short, it is not so much my

wish that the United States should gain credit among foreign nations for the loan of money, as that all nations, and especially your countrymen in Holland, should be made acquainted with the real state of the American war. The importance and greatness of this rising empire, the future extensive value of our commerce, the advantages of colonization, are objects which need only to be known, to command your attention, protection, and support.' With us it is to consider whether the same objects may not offer again in some other parts of America, and may not have equal claims upon the attention of all commercial nations. That our nation did not forget its obligations to France at the commencement of the French revolution, the documents respecting our foreign affairs, which have been given to the world by our minister, Mr. Monroe, now the President of the United States, will sufficiently explain. My instructions, says that great patriot, enjoined my utmost endeavours to inspire the French government with perfect confidence in the solicitude which was felt for the success of the French revolution, and of the preference due to a nation which had rendered us important services in our revolution. The senate had expressed with sensibility the same good wishes, and the House of Representatives say to the ally of the United States, that with increasing enthusiasm in the cause of liberty, they take a deep interest in the happiness and prosperity of the French republic. A nation, like our own, that is indebted to foreign aid for the independence it possesses; that has welcomed to its service the talents and virtues of foreigners; that has been solicitous to explain its hopes to the world, and professes in turn a readiness to prefer the allies of its infancy for the strength they gave, will not be hasty in rejecting the best opportunities to extend the blessings it enjoys in full



consent with its commerce and prosperity; and they who have felt the gratitude which the enthusiasm of past times has inspired, will never be deceived by any names which may be used to disgrace the obligations we owe to the cause of humanity, wherever it may appear. If our humanity can do but little, we may be suffered to do much by the example of those who consult only their own interest. We should not be deceived by a policy that may seem to appeal to our integrity, while it may serve itself of our simplicity. The history of our own may explain to us what we owe to South America.

“Dean Tucker, in his answer to objections upon separation of the colonies, observes—‘It has been the unanimous opinion of the North Americans for these fifty years past,’ speaking at the declaration of independence, ‘that the seat of empire ought to be transferred from the less to the greater country, that is, from England to America; or, as Dr. Franklin elegantly phrased it, from the cock-boat to the man of war. Moreover, the famous American pamphlet, *Common Sense*, (in the composition of which Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams are supposed to be principally concerned) declares it to be preposterous, absurd, and against the course of nature, ‘that a great continent should be governed by an island. In no instance hath Nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet. And as England and America, with respect to each other, reverse the common order of Nature, it is evident they belong to different systems—England to Europe, and America to itself.’”









AUG -1 1943









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